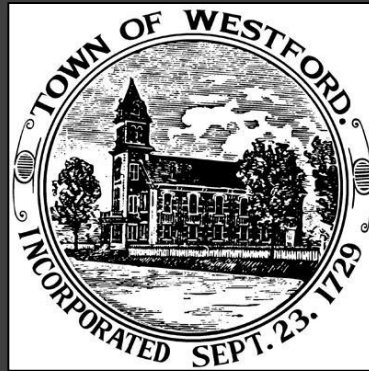


# TOWN OF WESTFORD

## State of the Town Fiscal Year 2019



Jodi Ross

Town Manager

March 24, 2018 Annual Town Meeting

**Westford**  
**March 8-9**  
**Storm Issues**

2

# Statistics

| Population Estimate - 2016                   | 24,232      | 10.40%<br>Change from 2010  |
|--|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Housing Units Estimate - FY18                | 8,721       | 13.10%<br>Change from 2011  |
| Median Home Price - FY18<br>(Single Family)  | \$520,393   | 6.03%<br>Change from FY2017 |
| Median Household Income - 2016<br>(Estimate) | \$130,739   |                             |
| Labor Force - 2017                           | 12,291      |                             |
| Unemployment - December 2017                 | 2.7% - Town | 3.5% - MA                   |

# FY 2018 Tax Rates

| Single Tax Rate Communities |             |            |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Town                        | Residential | Commercial |
| Acton                       | \$19.38     | \$19.38    |
| Chelmsford                  | \$17.96     | \$17.96    |
| Groton                      | \$18.67     | \$18.67    |
| Tyngsborough                | \$17.11     | \$17.11    |
| Westford*                   | \$16.18     | \$16.38    |

| Dual Tax Rate Communities |             |            |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Town                      | Residential | Commercial |
| Ayer                      | \$14.43     | \$31.00    |
| Bedford                   | \$13.74     | \$30.38    |
| Billerica                 | \$14.19     | \$33.65    |
| Burlington                | \$10.62     | \$27.56    |
| Littleton                 | \$18.14     | \$28.03    |
| Lexington                 | \$14.30     | \$27.69    |
| Tewksbury                 | \$16.13     | \$27.74    |

\*Westford currently has a small commercial tax exemption for properties assessed under \$1,000,000. This exemption is funded by large commercial properties.

# Municipal Project Update

- New \$12.7M Boston Road Fire Station
  - Completion date 10/31/18
  - 20,000 SQFT
  - Five double equipment bays
  - Training/conference room





# Municipal Project Update

- State-of-the-Art Combined Dispatch for Police and Fire
  - Opened November 8<sup>th</sup> 2017
  - Increased efficiency for handling 911 calls



# Municipal Project Update

- \$7.5M Rehabilitation of the Roudenbush Community Center building
- Estimated completion date 12/31/18





# Municipal Project Update

- New Center Building – 9,250 SQFT
  - Large public meeting space -100 person capacity
  - IT, Veterans, and Facilities Departments
  - Seeking design funding – Article 8





# Public-Private Partnerships

- Mill Works
  - Old Courier Building
  - 22 Town Farm Road
  - 260,000 SQFT
  - Parks and Recreation Department Currently Leasing Office and Programming Space
- Business Opportunities
  - 12 North Main
    - Historic mill clean up and redevelopment
  - 35 Town Farm Road



# Residential Development

## Projects Under Construction:

- Single-Family Subdivisions
  - Juniper Hill
    - 75 Graniteville Rd
    - 18 lots approved
    - 2 Habitat for Humanity Projects
- Mill Redevelopment
  - Abbot Mill Phase 2
    - Under construction
    - 103 rental units





# Residential Development

## *Approved 40B developments:*

- Alder Point
  - 354 Groton Road, 8 town houses for purchase
- Two Robbins Road
  - adjacent to Red Hat, 180 rental units
- Residences at Westford West
  - Behind Red Hat, 240 rental units
- Sugar Maple Lane
  - 4 Powers Road, 28 town houses for purchase



# Residential Development & Subsidized Housing Index

## *In Permitting Process:*

- Spalding Estates
  - St. Augustine/Dunstable Rd
  - 31 lots proposed
- Possible Future Developments on Nutting and Dunstable Road
- Notification Received for Intent to Sell Merrill Quarry for the Development of 40+ Residential Lots in Westford
- Westford's Current SHI Stands at 13.75%



Merrill Quarry Parcel



# Commercial Development

- \$3M Renovation Tech Park East  
Juniper Networks
- UTC Aerospace proposed  
renovation at 7-9 Tech Park East
- Orchard Square
  - Littleton Road
  - 18,000 SQFT complete
    - Retail, Restaurant, Bank
    - Space still available



*Tech Park East*



*Orchard Square*

# Commercial Development

- Veryfine building 210 Littleton Road - Liquor License approved for restaurant construction – building leases underway
- Belle's Bistro became Fuse Bistro
- Escape Room 434 Littleton Road
- Kimball Farm - completed Wastewater Treatment Plant - Looped Water Supply from Littleton



# Engineering/Infrastructure

## *Recently Completed:*

- Plain Road Sidewalk
- Complete Streets Grant Work
- 10 miles of Road Paving

## *2017 / 2018 Construction:*

- Main Street Road Reconstruction
- Tadmuck Road / Route 110 Intersection
- Groton Road / Oak Hill Intersection

## *In Design:*

- Groton Road / Dunstable Road
- Beaver Brook Bridge
- Boston Road
- Route 110 (Cornerstone to Powers Rd)



Plain Road



Main Street



Boston Road

# Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) Funding since 2009

| Project                     | Fed/State Funding |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Boston Road Reconstruction  | \$6.0M            |
| Tadmuck Road Intersection   | \$2.4M            |
| Minot's Corner              | \$3.9M            |
| Concord Road Intersection   | \$2.7M            |
| Powers Road Intersection    | \$1.1M            |
| Oak Hill Road Intersection  | \$2.5M            |
| Beaver Brook Bridge         | \$1.6M            |
| Dunstable Road Intersection | \$2.5M            |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$22.7M</b>    |

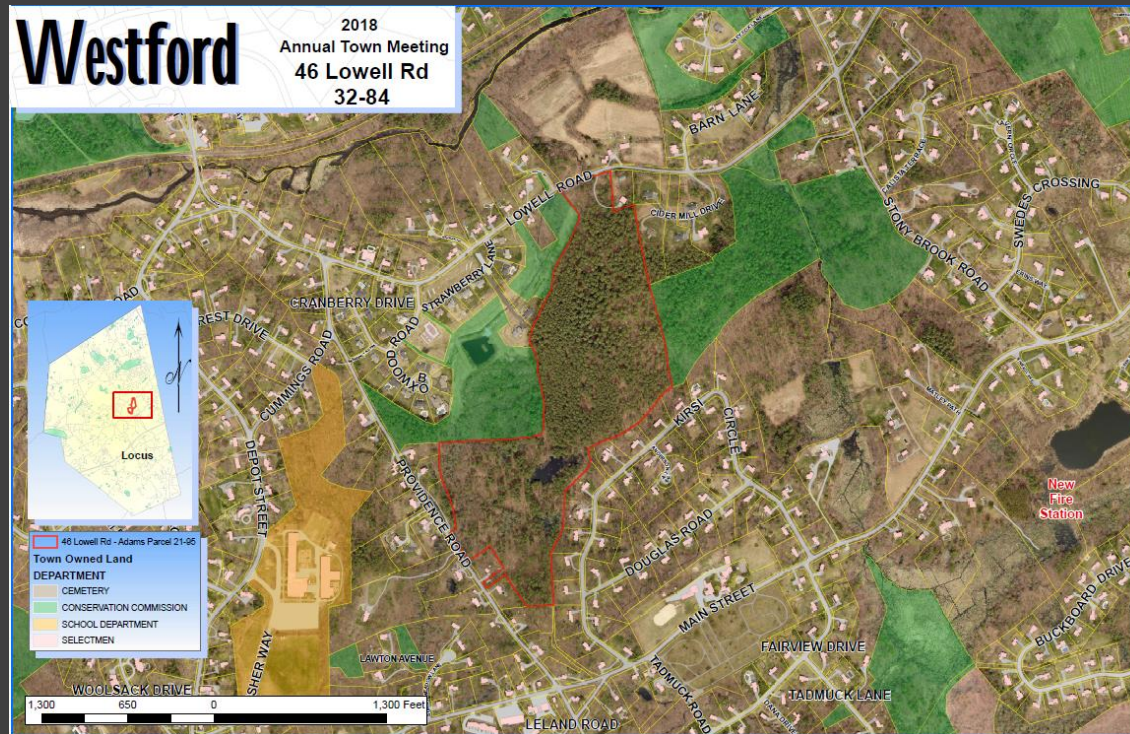


# Conservation Protected Land



- Purchase Conservation Restriction on 45 acres, abutting Burn's Hill Conservation area, with trail easement
- Parcel is off Hildreth Street and Wright Lane, known as "Salt Box" parcel
- Includes scenic agricultural fields and forested wetlands
- Article 13 - CPC Article

# Conservation Protected Land



- Purchase 50 acres of land for conservation purposes
- Parcel known as “Adam’s Property” located on Lowell and Providence Roads
- Surrounded by Open Space (Laughton Farm and Cider Mill) including mature woodlands with existing trails and two small ponds
- Article 13 - CPC Article

# FY18 Revenues

- \$408K in New Growth
- State Aid increased by \$344,693 to \$21,247,945
- \$3.51M Motor Vehicle Excise – 27% bills paid online
- Local Options Excise projected at \$1.17M
- Collected \$654,624 in licenses & permits through mid-March (75% of budget)
- Earned \$69,231 in General Fund Investment Earnings through February (107% of budget)
- Community Preservation Act state contribution for FY18 at \$324,179, down from \$373,932 in FY17




# Sample of Grants and Gifts Received

- Green Communities Grant for energy efficiency projects \$250,000
- LRTA for COA vans \$95,202
- EOPS grants for Police Department \$53,360
- Executive Office of Elder Affairs Grant \$32,534
- LSTA (Library) Grant \$10,000
- Emergency Management \$4,960
- Cultural Council \$4,900
- Fire Safety \$4,308



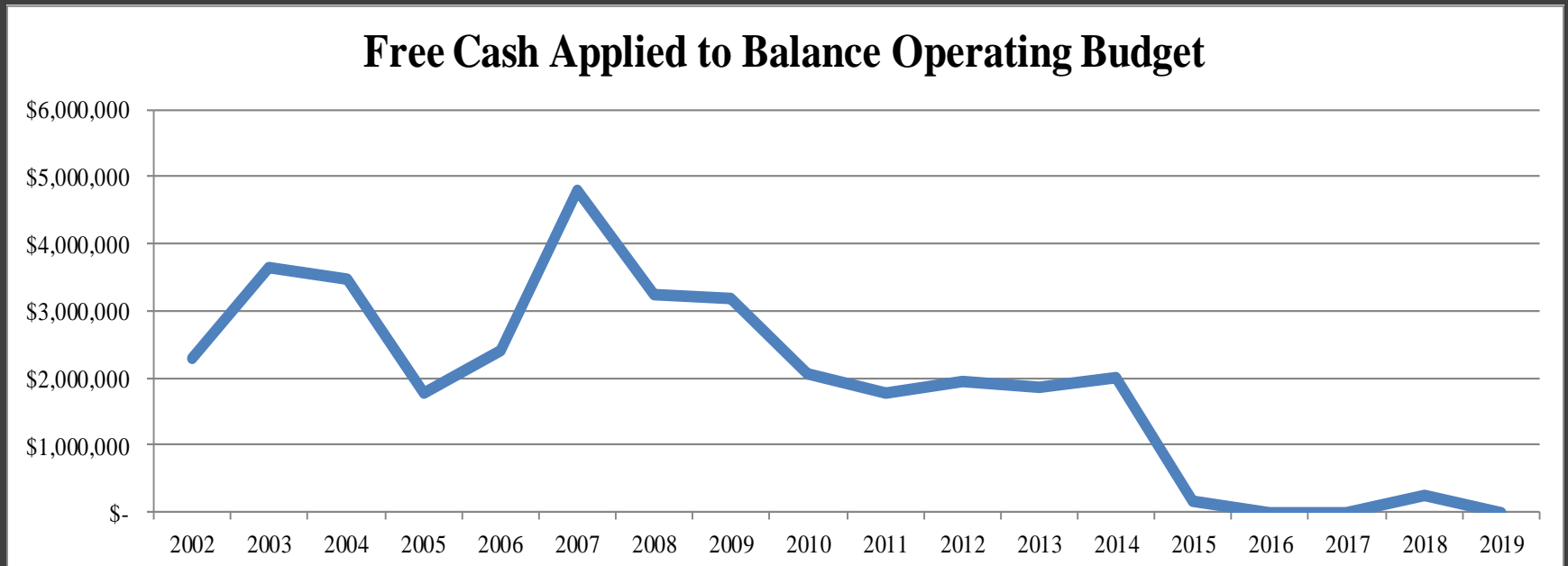


# Recommend FY19 Budget

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Town of Westford Table of Contents</p>   | <h2>Fiscal Years<br/>2019-2021</h2>                              |
| <p>March 24, 2018</p>   |  |
| <h3>Town of Westford Budget</h3>  |  |
|  <p>1</p> | <p>Jodi Ross<br/>Town of Westford<br/>Fiscal Years 2019-2021</p> |

# Financial Accomplishments

- Presenting a balanced budget to Town Meeting
- Adhered to the 2019 Board of Selectmen Budget Policy Directive
- Maintained AAA rating from Standard & Poor's
- History of reserves applied to balance the budget

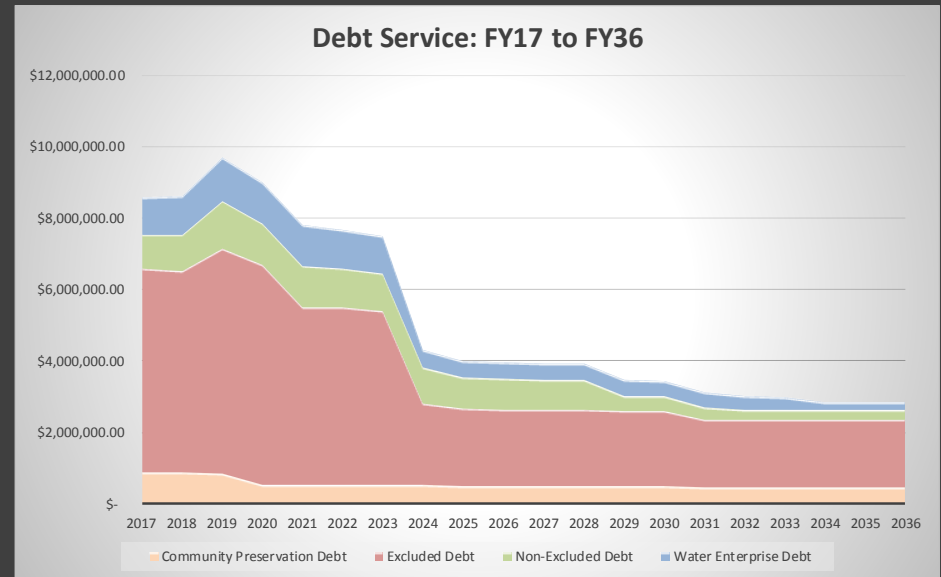


# FY2019 Budget Highlights

- Initial budget requests +5.21% - Reduced by \$2.01M to balance budget
- Total cash reserves \$9.27M [8.90%]
- Overall Budget Increase +3.40% - additional \$3.76M
  - General Fund Budget Increase +2.89% - additional \$2.97M
- Westford Public Schools +2.55% – additional \$1.44M
- Other town departments +2.47% – additional \$545K
- N.V.T.H.S. assessment +17.33% to \$828,888
- CPC Budget +55.4% - Debt Service for Roudenbush & Adams
- Requesting \$9.89M in capital investments in buildings, infrastructure and equipment – Article 13 - CPC Article

# FY2019 Budget Highlights

Structured fire station debt  
to coincide with expiring  
excluded debt to lessen tax  
impact



| General Fund Excluded                            | 2018             | 2019             | 2020             | 2021             | 2022             | 2023             | 2024             | 2025             |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Total GF Excluded Debt - Permanently Bond</b> | <b>5,637,645</b> | <b>5,883,795</b> | <b>5,937,570</b> | <b>4,437,120</b> | <b>4,500,200</b> | <b>4,261,638</b> | <b>1,420,100</b> | <b>1,262,600</b> |
| Highway Garage A&E                               | 52,000           |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Elementary School Construction                   | 1,639,638        | 1,644,638        | 1,631,125        | 1,624,725        | 1,627,025        | 1,589,988        |                  |                  |
| Middle School Construction                       | 1,561,108        | 1,568,508        | 1,558,145        | 1,544,895        | 1,545,275        | 1,513,300        |                  |                  |
| Highway Garage Construction - Refunding          | 586,200          | 565,700          | 540,400          | 510,400          | 485,800          | 461,500          | 127,500          |                  |
| Highway Garage D&E Refunding                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
| Academy Refunding 1                              | 1,508,600        | 1,424,600        | 1,346,800        | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| Senior Center                                    | 290,100          | 270,350          | 266,100          | 256,600          | 252,100          | 242,350          | 237,600          | 231,600          |
| Fire Station Bond #1 10,000,000                  |                  | 410,000          | 595,000          | 500,500          | 590,000          | 454,500          | 1,055,000        | 1,031,000        |



# FY2019 Budget Highlights

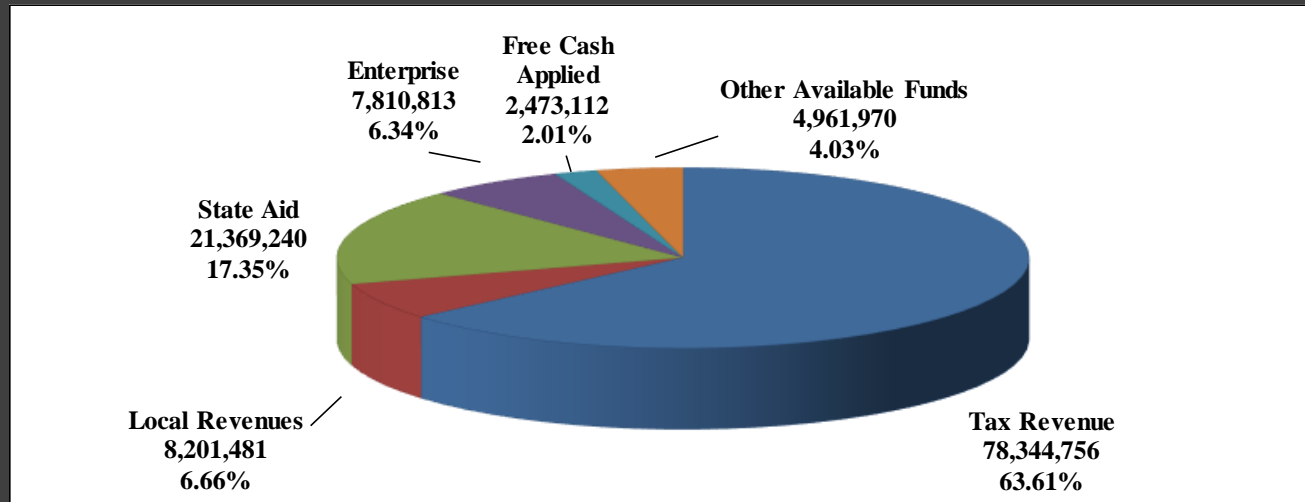
- Town budget – detail
  - Two additional paramedics to be hired in July 2018
  - Two additional police patrol officers to be hired July 2018
  - Director of Facilities and Facilities Office Manager – shared 25% town and 75% schools
  - Asst. Planner 24 hours per week to 37.5 hrs (fully funded)
  - Asst. Building Insp part time to 37.5 hrs (fully funded)
- School department received a 2.55% increase
  - 1.61% increase plus additional \$530,000 from the override for teacher contract

# FY 2019 Projected Revenue

- Local Revenue estimated 1.22% increase
- New Growth \$750,000
- Ambulance Enterprise revenue \$825,000
- State Aid in Governor's Budget + 0.57% by \$121,295 for a total of \$21,369,240
- Projected \$1,185,520 in hotels and meals excise taxes
- Motor vehicle excise projected to increase by \$52,720 to \$3,567,417

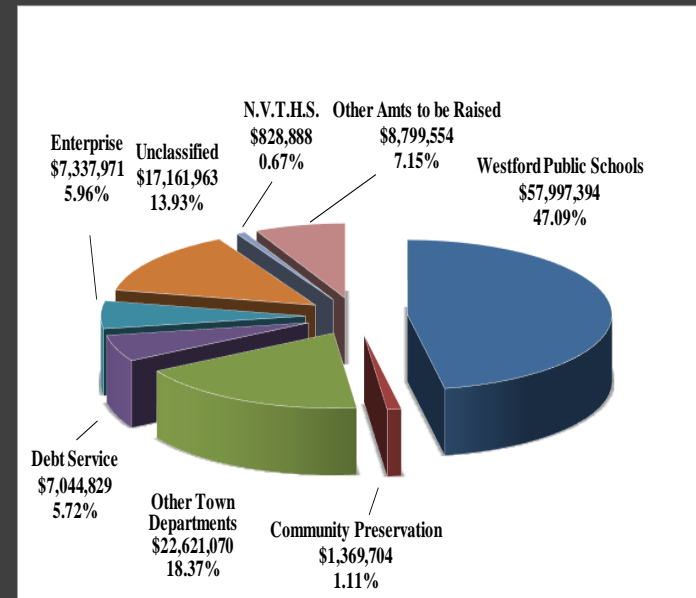
# FY19 Projected Revenue

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Tax Revenue                   | \$78,344,756         |
| Local Revenue                 | 8,201,481            |
| State Aid                     | 21,369,240           |
| Enterprise Revenue            | 7,810,813            |
| Reserves Applied              | 0                    |
| Other Available Funds         | 4,961,971            |
| Appropriations from Free Cash | 2,473,112            |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$123,161,373</b> |



# FY19 Expenditures

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Westford Public Schools      | \$57,997,394         |
| Community Preservation       | 1,369,704            |
| Other Town Departments       | 22,621,070           |
| Debt Service                 | 7,044,829            |
| Enterprise                   | 7,337,971            |
| Unclassified*                | 17,161,963           |
| N.V.T.H.S.                   | 828,888              |
| Other Amounts to be Raised** | 8,799,554            |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>\$123,161,373</b> |



\*The Unclassified Budget includes; health insurance; pensions assessment, unemployment insurance, general insurance, OPEB contribution, and vacation and sick buyback (town only).

\*\*Other Amounts be Raised includes; state assessments for services; state aid reserved for direct assessment (school choice, library); overlay, the capital plan, community preservation projects; and any other appropriation made at town meeting besides the operating budget.



# Health Insurance Budget

- FY18 budgeted 8% increase – received 13% increase for non-Medicare plan - negotiated plan design changes with employees for a 2.74% increase
  - Co-pays, prescription, and hospital fees increased
- FY19 budget reflects \$128,515 increase from FY18 totaling \$10,411,187
- \$533,496 in Health Insurance Stabilization Fund - recommend transferring \$100,000 to fund at town meeting
- Meeting regularly with Public Employee Committee and Insurance Advisory Committee to prepare for 11/1/18 renewal

# Other Post Employment Benefits

- OPEB policy – annually fund “normal costs” – accrued liability for employees hired after Jan 1, 2012
- Funding OPEB at \$860,115 within the operating budget and \$135,472 from Free Cash for a total of \$995,587
- OPEB Trust Fund current balance \$4,493,814 – after this appropriation = \$5,489,401
  - Currently in the top 25% percent of Massachusetts communities for funding our OPEB liability

# FY19 Capital Investment

Capital Planning Committee recommendation: **\$9,893,139**

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Free Cash                              | \$1,607,795 |
| General Fund Bonds                     | \$4,361,442 |
| Enterprise Bonds                       | \$2,320,000 |
| Enterprise Retained Earnings           | \$1,081,902 |
| Other available funds                  | \$482,000   |
| Appropriation to Capital Stabilization | \$40,000    |

*\*Capital Stabilization current balance: \$815,848*

# Nashoba Valley Technical High School Opens New Engineering Academy

- Governor Charlie Baker visited Nashoba Valley Technical High School to tour new State-of-the-Art equipment that was funded by the 2016 Workforce Skills Capital Grant Program in the amount of \$495,000





# Congratulations Westford!

- WPS ranked #5 out of 9,577 eligible districts by the National Council for Home Safety and Security
- WPS ranked as the #29 Best Public School District in the U.S. in 2018 by Niche.com
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Best School District in Massachusetts
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Safest School District in Massachusetts
- WPS ranked 14<sup>th</sup> best school district in 2017 by SchoolDigger.com
- Expedia Travel Blog recently named Westford the “most beautiful town in Massachusetts” in 2017

# Congratulations Westford!

- Marilyn Frank named “Unsung Heroine” by MA Commission on the Status of Women
- Police officers Ian McEnaney and Greg Burns received Exceptional Service Medals for their actions on April 17, 2017
- Gail Johnson inducted as Local Public Health Institute Fellow
- Engineering department won the 2016 STORMY Award for best stormwater ideas from New England Stormwater Collaborative
- Highway Superintendent Chip Barrett named as 2018 Top Ten Public Works Leader of the Year by the American Public Works Association



# Thank You Westford!

Thank you to our board members, department heads, employees, volunteers, and all of our residents for your creativity, countless contributions, and most of all, your unwavering commitment to our community.

